302 [412] [881] [765] [824]

The hair was cut (gumgaowi) with a stone knife (tagil) and washed in plain water. The hair was always cut as the girl's puberty and when in mourning. Facial hair was pulled out with the fingers. A hairbrush (itwega) was made from the stiff dark brown root of the soaproot that was gathered west of the crest of the Sierras. This same brush was used in the seed pounding processes and then called an itgumbeyut.

301 237

Feathers were worn for almost any special occasion, often with a headband (ih¢pbey¢gul). Women wore feathers on the back of their head usually, while men wore them anywhere in the hair or tied on to their elbows or knees. Any large feathers may be worn, but magpie and eagle were favored.

304 301 [756]

The ear lobe was often pierced by men and women with a wooden awl to receive an ear ornament which consisted of a bead or shell pendent on a string or a bone tube. More rarely, the nasal septum would be pierced by men, usually a shaman, to receive a bone pin.

301 [237]

Necklaces (uml¢suk), bracelets (m¢liuy¢k), and other jewelry were made from shell (madap), bone tubes, a red berry (d¢ell¢l¢gi d¢tki), animal claws, seeds, plant stems, rose buds (p¢sum¢li), and cedar knots. Shell beads (makau) or pendants were made from Olivella, Dentalium, Heliotis and local freshwater shellfish.

302 304 [531] [386]

The Washo used face and body paints as well as tattooing. Boys about nine and girls about fourteen or fifteen were often given decorative tattoos (mishu). The designs were the same for both sexes and consisted mainly of dots, lines, or circles. The pigment was a black soot (ts¢chit) mixed with grease. Roy James reported the use of acorn (malung) juice for tattooing. This was applied to the skin and scratched or pricked in with a sharp plant sticker from the buck brush plant (dau watl dama).

The process of pricking the ts¢chit into the skin was called balnasung. The operation would be repeated each day for two or three days. The tatooed spot would swell up a little, but not be particularly painful. Hank Pete's aunt put the letter "A" on his wrist so he would remember her.

302 [751] [177]

Face and body paints of red, yellow, black, and white were used by both men and women for social gatherings, a bad dream, in shamanistic practices, or to prevent the skin from darkening during the summer. None was put in the hair. Red was commonly put on women's faces as a rouge, but this may be a rather recent innovation.

302 386 [317]

The red ochre (sawasung) was gathered south of Dayton and south of Markleeville. It was found in a powder form, wetted, rolled into a stick,

769 114 southern California; but since the statement came in answer to direct inquiry and no further details were forthcoming, its truth cannot be accepted without further evidence." None of the other investigators among the Washo has found evidence of an annual mourning ceremony. Our informants did not report it.

Birth Ceremonies

843 844 [854] 846 844 [842] [828] Women were active during pregnancy and there were no special observances before birth. When the baby was born, it was bathed, wrapped with its arms at its sides, and placed in a winnowing basket (modal). Bertha Holbrook says that the baby was not bathed again until the umbilical cord fell off. Stewart (1941, 408) says the baby was bathed about every five days and placed in a new basket after each bath. The afterbirth was arranged with the umbilical cord inside and buried upright. Stewart (1941, 408) says the afterbirth was wrapped in bark before burial. The Washo believed that if the afterbirth was buried upside down the woman would have no more children. The baby's umbilical cord was kept moistened and was wrapped with ground pinenut bark. When it fell off it was tied to a stick and this in turn was tied to the right side of the winnowing basket. The Washo believed that this would make the baby right-handed.

846 [431] [751] [461] [431] The husband went to a stream and bathed after the birth. He left a present beside the stream which anyone could come and take. Lowie (1939, 305) reports that after the birth the husband gave some man a buckskin, which helped to keep disease away from the infant. Until the cord fell off, the husband took a cold bath every morning; was not supposed to sleep at night; ate no meat, salt or grease; did not gamble or smoke (Stewart, 1941, 409); and was constantly working. The husband's incessant activity was to make the child industrious in later life. When the cord fell off, the mother announced it. Then the husband went hunting, killed some animal, and distributed it in his household. On this day any nonrelative could come and help himself to the property of the husband. After the cord had fallen off, the husband returned to normal life and could again eat meat, salt and grease.

[834] [514] For a month after the birth, the mother did not bathe; ate no meat, grease, or salt; drank only warm water; used a scratching stick (Stewart, 1941, 408); and she and her husband had no sexual intercourse. Stewart (1941, 409) says the couple was continent for from six to 12 months. For two weeks the mother lay tightly covered upon a warm bed. The bed was made by digging a shallow ditch, putting hot sand and ashes in it, and covering it with grass. She did not leave the house during this time, even to relieve herself. The Washo believed that the woman had to be cured inside after a birth and that the hot bed and food taboos aided in draining out the bad blood.

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[431] [603] [852] A feast terminated the period (one or two months) during which the mother was not permitted to eat meat. Gifts were given away and it was particularly important for the grandparents to be present, the food being passed to them first. The mother at this feast ate meat again and a little ritual was performed for the baby.

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302 The baby was often rubbed with soft sagebrush, which after use was thrown eastward. If it was a girl her forehead and cheeks were painted with red ocher. If it was a boy his nose and chin were painted with a white pigment (dipek).

352
854 The first cradle was used on the day of birth and a new cradle was used after each bath during the mother's confinement. These temporary cradles are quite different from the permanent cradles in having an oval back, woven sides at the head end, and no hood in front or crossbars on the back.[5] The temporary cradles are not used today and are rarely seen.

[751] The baby was placed in its first permanent basketry cradle at the end of the mother's confinement, and new larger cradles were used as the child grew. Up to five cradles may have been used before the child began to walk. The hood or sunshade (ma?yó·dop) of the cradle had pendants of shell or beads suspended from the front "to prevent the child from becoming cross-eyed." [531] Hank Pete said that the baby's umbilical cord was tied to the front of the hood for this purpose. The hood still carries a design of parallel diagonal lines for a boy and a continuous zigzag or diamond chain design for a girl.

854 A sagebrush bark pad was placed in the cradle and the infant, wrapped in a small rabbitskin robe, was placed over this and lashed to the cradle with buckskin. A buckskin strap was attached to the back of the cradle and passed over the forehead of the woman who carried it.

843 If a miscarriage occurred the fetus was disposed of in the same manner as the placenta and umbilical cord and the same beliefs attended this act. One woman was careless enough to allow her mother-in-law, who was angry [754] with her, to see the disposal of the fetus. It was believed that the mother-in-law had either destroyed it or turned it over and buried it in another place, because this woman never had another child and was in poor health after the miscarriage.

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847 A stillborn baby was buried in warmed ground and the baby basket was placed in the crotch of a tree, or merely thrown away. Abortion was effected by applying pressure to the abdomen. The men are said to have objected to this.

5. Susie Dick made one of these cradles for Grace Dangberg.